Nature & Science Journals: You CAN Do This!

By Maggie Hogan

Why? - They're the ultimate repository for kids' learning experiences.

What is notebooking? - It is the act of recording and organizing what one is learning in a permanent and attractive way.

Science Notebooks - Develop observation, organization, research skills and much more.

Where to Start - Start simple! Use your upcoming science studies as a guideline as to what type of journal to begin. Or pick a topic that lends itself well to a journal. Take your children's likes and temperament into consideration.

Physical Notebooks - Diaries and/or Journals. Lapbooks. Three-Ring Binders and Composition books. Video Cases. Scrapbooking. Miniatures. Folders. Envelope journals – dirt, seed pods, leaves, flowers, ticket stubs, dead bugs. . .

Styles of Notebooks - Garden Journals. Travel Journal. Tree Journal. Change of Season Notebook. Field Guides – trees, seashells, rocks. Mad Scientist's Lab Notebook.

How to Inspire Kids – Stickers. Cameras. Coloring books. Nature magazines. Good TV shows, videos. Field trips. Binoculars. Magnifying glass. Telescope. Microscope. Trips to craft stores. Arts/paper crafts magazines. Art supplies. Rubber stamps. Science reference books. JOY!

Science Journals Across The Curriculum

- Science – Earth science. Biology/life science. Engineering. Geography. Environment. Observation and organizational skills.
- Math – Graphing. Charting. Measurements. Collecting and understanding date. Mapmaking
- Social Studies – Local history. Mapmaking.

Language Arts – Writing. Researching. Drawing Conclusions.

Ideas of things that can go into Science Notebooks – Drawings. Labels for drawings. Notations on where the item was found and weather conditions. Clouds. Night sky. Life cycles. Habitats. Science experiments. Nature pressings. Leave/seed samples. Drawings/samples of flower parts. Sketchings of animal tracks. Garden plans. Scripture verses, poems, quotations, etc. Fun forms to fill out. Coloring pages. Magazine cut-outs. Drawings of Lego/block creations. House plans. How things work. Gears. Amusement park rides. Magnets, light, sounds.

Places to explore – City parks. State & national parks. Backyards. Ponds, rivers, lakes, seas. Fields. Forests. Sky. Microscopic world. Zoos. Museums. Auto mechanics shop. Doctor's office. Airport.

Book Resources

- *Linnea in Monet's Garden* by Christina Bjork.
- *Keeping a Nature Journal* by Clare Walker Leslie and Charles E. Roth.
- *Country Diary of an Edwardian Lady* by Edith Holden.
- *Wild Days, Creating Discovery Journals* by Karen Rackliffe.
- *The New How Things Work*. DK Science Encyclopedia.

Web Resources - Google search under "nature journals, children"

Also, google, click on "images" and then type in the critter of which you would like to see photos and drawings. Awesome resource!

- http://www.howstuffworks.com (middle school & up)
- http://howthingswork.virginia.edu (high school & up)
- http://www.bugbios.com stunning photography!
- http://www.ajkids.com - Ask Jeeves for Kids. Type in your question or look at the question files.
- http://www.nationalgeographic.com/kids - so much to see and do!
- http://www.exploratorium.edu - tons of hands on science activities and much, much more!